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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
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09/458,533 12/09/99 LI

C 99-743

 EXAMINER

HM22/0406

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ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1655

DATE MAILED:

04/06/01

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/458,533	LI ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Bradley L. Sisson	1655

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 March 2001.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 28-55 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 28-35 and 38-55 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 36 and 37 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.
- 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved.
- 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____ .
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

Attachment(s)

- 15) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 18) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ .
- 16) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 19) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 17) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ . 20) Other: _____ .

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Prosecution Application

1. The request filed on 21 March 2001 for a Continued Prosecution Application (CPA) under 37 CFR 1.53(d) based on parent Application No. 09/458,533 is acceptable and a CPA has been established. An action on the CPA follows.

Claim Objections

2. The numbering of claims is not in accordance with 37 CFR 1.126, which requires the original numbering of the claims to be preserved throughout the prosecution. When claims are canceled, the remaining claims must not be renumbered. When new claims are presented, they must be numbered consecutively beginning with the number next following the highest numbered claims previously presented (whether entered or not). It is noted that the application was originally filed with claims 1-35 and that after the restriction requirement of 24 April 2000 (see Paper No. 7) claims 28-35 had been withdrawn from consideration.

Misnumbered claims 28-47 have been renumbered 36-55. Please note that the dependencies of claims 38-55 have NOT been altered. Accordingly, claims 38-55 depend from claims drawn to a non-elected invention. Applicant is urged to submit an amendment whereby the correct dependency is reflected in each of claims 38-55.

For purposes of examination, claims 38-55 have been considered drawn to a non-elected invention

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Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

5. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time that any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

6. Claims 36 and 37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heller et al., in view of Wiles et al.

Heller et al., disclose an apparatus comprising microelectrodes to be used in the detection of molecular interactions between an immobilized oligonucleotide probe and a target nucleic

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acid molecule. Column 12 discloses that electrode may be comprised of silver, platinum as well as alternative metals (lines 55-59). The aspect of having the electrodes insulated through the use of materials such as SiO₂ is disclosed at column 13, first full paragraph. The aspect of having incorporated gel pads, such as polyacrylamide gel, is disclosed at column 15, second paragraph. The aspect of using the apparatus to carry out a variety of multi-step and/or multiplex reactions and procedures, including nucleic acid hybridization procedures, is disclosed at column 16-19. At column 19 there is disclosed the incorporation of detection means.

Heller et al., do not disclose the use of a buffer that comprises lithium.

Wiles et al., like Heller et al., above, disclose an electrode that can be used in nucleic acid binding reactions (column 4, last paragraph). As seen therein, the electrode incorporates the use of lithium ions.

In view of the totality of the prior art of record, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have incorporated the use of a lithium reagent buffer in the electrode of Heller et al., as the prior art teaches explicitly of the use of just such a buffer in such an apparatus. For the above reasons and in the absence of convincing evidence to the contrary, the claims are rejected under 35 USC 103(a).

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Bradley L. Sisson whose telephone number is (703) 308-3978. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Thursday.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, W Gary Jones can be reached on (703) 308-1152. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 305-3592 for regular communications and (703) 308-0294 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0196.



Bradley L. Sisson
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1655

BLS
April 4, 2001